National Tribune.

"To care for him who has borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans."

ESTABLISHED 1877—NEW SERIES. WASHINGTON, D. C., THURSDAY, APRIL 15, 1897. VOL. XVI—NO. 27—WHOLE NO. 818.

Andersonville:

A Story of Rebel Military Prisons.

(COPYRIGHT.)

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

The wonderful country about Cumberland Gap, and the strategic importance of that place. The great need of food and forage for the garrison sends a battalion of cavalry up Powell's Valley to clear it out and secure its supplies. A rebel command starts down the valley to drive the Union troopers out. The two forces meet on top of a hill, and a prompt charge gives the day to the Union men and scatters the rebels in headlong rout.

The cavalry battalion occupies the country gained, and protects the forage trains sent out to gather up the supplies and haul them in. This duty lasts until the morning of Jan. 3, 1864.

The battalion is attacked by Jones's Brigade of rebels, and after a stubborn, desperate fight is compelled to surrender.

The prisoners are taken by rail through a picturesque part of Virginia to Richmond.

They arrive in Richmond, are searched at the Libbey, and sent to different prisons.

CHAPTER VIII.

INTRODUCTION TO PRISON LIFE—THE PEMBERTON BUILDING AND ITS OCCUPANTS. NEAT SAILORS — ROLL-CALL — RATIONS AND CLOTHING—CHIVALRIC "CONFISCATION."

BEGAN ACquainting myself with my new situation and surroundings. The building into which I had been conducted was an old tobacco factory, called the "Pemberton building," possibly from an owner of that name, and standing on the corner of what I was told were Fifteenth and Carey streets. In front it was four stories high; behind but three, owing to the rapid rise of the hill against which it was built.

It fronted toward the James River and Kanawha Canal, and the James River—both lying side by side, and only 100 yards distant, with no intervening buildings. The front windows afforded a fine view. To the right front was Libby, with its guards pacing around it on the sidewalks, watching the 1,500 officers confined within its walls. At intervals during each day squads of fresh prisoners could be seen entering its dark mouth, to be registered and searched, and then marched off to the prison assigned them. We could see up the James River for a mile or so, to where the long bridges crossing it bounded the view. Directly in front, across the river, was a flat, sandy plain, said to be Gen. Winfield Scott's farm, and now used as a proving ground for the guns cast at the Tredegar Iron Works.

The view down the river was very fine. It extended about 12 miles, to where a gap in the woods seemed to indicate a fort, which we imagined to be Fort Darling, at that time the principal fortification defending the passage of the James. Between that point and where we were lay the river, in a long, broad, mirror-like expanse, like a pretty little inland lake. Occasionally a busy little tug would bustle up or down, a gunboat move along with noiseless dignity, suggestive of a reserved power, or a schooner beat lazily from one side to the other. But these were so few as to make even more pronounced the customary idleness that hung over the scene. The tug's activity seemed spasmodic and forced—a sort of protest against the gradually increasing lethargy that reigned upon the bosom of the waters—the gunboat floated along as if performing a perfunctory duty, and the schooners sailed about as if tired of remaining in one place. That little stretch of water was all that was left for a cruising ground. Beyond Fort Darling the Union gunboats lay, and the only vessel that passed the barrier was the occasional flag-of-truce steamer.

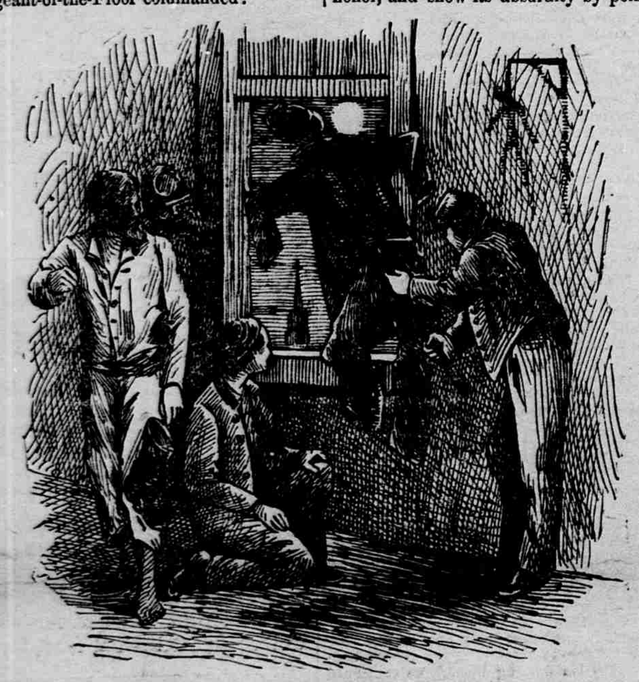
The basement of the building was occupied as a storehouse for the taxes-in-kind which the Confederate Government collected. On the first floor were about five hundred men. On the second floor—where I was—were about four hundred men. These were principally from the First Division, First Corps—distinguished by a round red patch on their caps; First Division, Second Corps, marked by a red clover leaf, and the First Division, Third Corps, who wore a red diamond. They were mainly captured at Gettysburg and Mine Run. Besides these there was a considerable number from the Eighth Corps, captured at Winchester, and a large infusion of cavalry—1st, 2d and 3d W. Va.—taken in Averill's desperate raid up the Virginia Valley with the Wytheville Salt Works as an objective.

On the third floor were about 200 sailors and marines, taken in the gallant but luckless assault upon the ruins of Fort Sumter, in the September previous. They retained the discipline of the ship in their quarters, kept themselves trim and clean, and their floor as white as a ship's deck. They did not court the society of the "sojers" below, whose camp ideas of neatness differed from theirs. A few old barnacle-backs always sat on guard around the head of the steps leading from the lower rooms.

For convenience in issuing rations we were divided into messes of 20, each mess electing a Sergeant as its head, and each floor electing a Sergeant-of-the-Floor, who drew rations and enforced what little discipline was observed.

Though we were not so neat as the sailors above us, we tried to keep our quarters reasonably clean, and we washed the floor every morning, getting down on our knees and rubbing it clean and dry with rags. Each mess detailed a man each day to wash up the part of the floor it occupied, and he had to do this properly or no ration would be given him. While the washing up was going on each man stripped himself and made close examination of his garments for the vermin, which otherwise would have increased beyond control. Blankets were also carefully hunted over for these "small deer."

About 8 o'clock a spruce little lisping rebel named Ross would appear with a book, and a body-guard, consisting of a big Irishman, who had the air of a policeman, and carried a musket-barrel made into a cane. Behind him were two or three armed guards. The Sergeant-of-the-Floor commanded:



AN EVENING'S AMUSEMENT WITH THE GUARDS.

"Fall in in four ranks for roll-call."

We formed along one side of the room; the guards halted at the head of the stairs; Ross walked down in front and counted the files, closely followed by his Irish aid, with his gun-barrel cane raised ready for use upon any one who should arouse his ruffianly ire. Breaking ranks we returned to our places, and sat around in moody silence for three hours. We had eaten nothing since the previous noon. Rising hungry, our hunger seemed to increase in arithmetical ratio with every quarter of an hour.

These times afforded an illustration of the thorough subjection of man to the tyrant Stomach. A more irritable lot of individuals could scarcely be found outside of a menagerie than these men during the hours waiting for rations. "Crosser than two sticks" utterly failed as a comparison. They were crosser than the lines of a check apron. Many could have given odds to the traditional bear with a sore head, and run out of the game 50 points ahead of him. It was astonishingly easy to get up a fight at these times. There was no need of going a step out of the way to search for it, as one could have a full-fledged article of overwhelming size on his hands at any instant, by a trifling indiscretion of speech or manner. All the old irritating flings between the cavalry, the artillery, and the infantry, the older "first-call" men, and the later or "Three-Hundred-Dollar men," as they were derisively dubbed, between the different corps of the Army of the Potomac, between men of different States, and lastly between the adherents and opponents of McClellan, came to the lips and were answered by a blow with the fist, when a ring would be formed around the combatants by a crowd, which would encourage them with yells to do their best. In a few minutes one of the parties to the fistic debate, who found the point raised by him not well taken, would retire to the sink to wash the blood from his battered face, and the rest would resume their seats and glower at space until some fresh excitement roused them. For the last hour or so of these long waits hardly a word would be spoken. We were too ill-natured to talk for amusement, and there was nothing else to talk for.

This spell was broken about 11 o'clock by the appearance at the head of the stairway of the Irishman with the gun-barrel cane, and his singing out:

"Sargint uv the flure: fourtane min and a bread-box!"

Instantly every man sprang to his feet, and pressed forward to be one of the favored 14. One did not get any more rations or obtain them any sooner by this, but it was a relief and a change to walk the half square outside the prison to the cookhouse and help carry the rations back.

For a little while after our arrival in Richmond the rations were tolerably good. There had been so much said about the privations of the prisoners that our Government had, after much quibbling and negotiation, succeeded in getting the privilege of sending food and clothing through the lines to us. Of course, but a small part of that sent ever reached its destination. There were too many greedy rebels along its line of passage to let much of it be received by those for whom it was intended. We could see from our windows rebels strutting about in overcoats, in which the box wrinkles were still plainly visible, wearing new "U. S." blankets as cloaks, and walking in Government shoes, worth fabulous prices in Confederate money.

Fortunately for our Government, the rebels decided to cut themselves off from this profitable source of supply. We read one day in the Richmond papers that "President Davis and his Cabinet had come to the conclusion that it was incompatible with the dignity of a sovereign power to permit another power with which it was at war to feed and clothe prisoners in its hands."

I will not stop to argue this point of honor, and show its absurdity by pointing out that it is not an unusual practice with nations at war. It is a sufficient commentary upon this assumption of punctiliousness that the paper went on to say that some five tons of clothing and 15 tons of food, which had been sent under a flag of truce to City Point, would neither be returned nor delivered to us, but "converted to the use of the Confederate Government."

"And surely they are *all* honorable men!"

Heaven save the mark.

CHAPTER IX.

BEANS OR PEAS—INSUFFICIENCY OF DARKY TESTIMONY—A GUARD KILLS A PRISONER—PRISONERS TEAZE THE GUARDS. DESPERATE OUTBREAK.

But, to return to the rations—a topic which, with escape or exchange, were to be the absorbing ones for us for the next 15 months. There was now issued to every two men a loaf of coarse bread—made of a mixture of flour and meal—and about the size and shape of an ordinary brick. This half loaf was accompanied, while our Government was allowed to furnish rations, with a small piece of corned beef. Occasionally we got a sweet potato or a half pint or such a matter of soup made from a coarse but nutritious bean or pea, called variously "nigger pea," "stock pea," or "cow pea."

This, by the way, became a fruitful bone of contention during our stay in the South. One strong party among us maintained that it was a bean, because it was shaped like one and brown, which they claimed no pea ever was. The other party held that it was a pea, because its various names all agreed in describing it as a pea, and because it was so full of bugs, none being entirely free from insects, and some having as many as 12, by actual count, within its shell. This, they declared, was a distinctive characteristic of the pea family.

The contention began with our first instalment of the leguminous ration, and was still raging between the survivors who passed into our lines in 1865. It waxed hot occasionally, and each side continually sought evidence to support its view of the case.

Once an old darky sent into the prison on some errand was summoned to decide a hot dispute that was raging in the crowd to which I belonged. The champion of the pea side said, producing one of the objects of dispute:

"Now, boys, keep still till I put the question fairly. Now, uncle, what do they call that there?"

The colored gentleman scrutinized the vegetable closely, and replied:

"Well, dey mos' generally calls 'em stock-peas, round hyar aways."

"There," said the pea champion triumphantly.

"But," broke in the leader of the party, "uncle, don't they also call them beans?"

"Well, yes, chile, I spec dat lots of 'em does."

And this was about the way the matter usually ended.

I will not attempt to bias the reader's judgment by saying which side I believed to be right. As the historic British showman said, in reply to the question as to whether an animal in his collection was a rhinoceros or an elephant, "You pays your money and you takes your choice."

The rations issued to us, as will be seen above, though they appear scanty, were still sufficient to support life and health, and months afterward, in Andersonville, we used to look back to them as sumptuous. We usually had them divided and eaten by noon, and, with the gnawings of hunger appeased, we spent the afternoon and evening comfortably. We told stories, paced up and down the floor for exercise, played cards, sung, read what few books were available, stood at the windows and studied the landscape, and watched the rebels trying their guns and shells, and so on as long as it was daylight. Occasionally it was dangerous to be about the windows. This depended wholly on the temper of the guards.

One day a member of a Virginia regiment on guard on the pavement in front deliberately left his beat, walked out into the center of the street, aimed his gun at a member of the 9th W. Va., who was standing at a window near, and firing, shot him through the heart, the bullet passing through his body and through the floor above. The act was purely malicious, and was done, doubtless, in revenge for some injury which our men had done the assassin or his family.

We were not altogether blameless, by any means. There were few opportunities to say bitterly offensive things to the guards let pass unimproved.

The prisoners in the third floor of the Smith building, adjoining us, had their own way of teasing them. Late at night, when everybody would be lying down, and out of the way of shots, a window in the third story would open, a broomstick, with a piece nailed across to represent arms, and clothed with a cap and blouse, would be protruded, and a voice coming from a man carefully protected by the wall, would inquire:

"S-a-y, g-u-a-r-d, what time is it?"

If the guard was of the long-suffering kind he would answer:

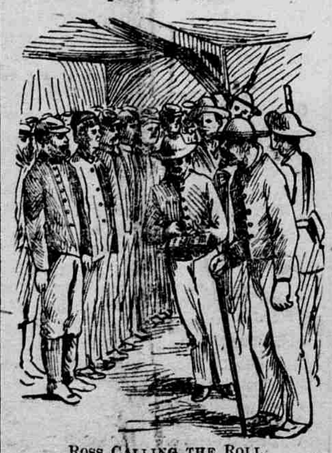
"Take yo' head back in up dah; you kno hits agin all odahs to do dat?"

Then the voice would say, aggravatingly: "Oh, well, go to ——, you —— rebel ——, if you can't answer a civil question."

Before the speech was ended the guard's rifle would be at his shoulder, and he would fire. Back would come the blouse and hat in haste, only to go out again the next instant, with a derisive laugh, and "Thought you were going to hurt somebody, didn't you, you ——————. But, Lord, you can't shoot for sour apples; if I couldn't shoot no better than you, Mr. Johnny Reb, I would"——

By this time the guard, having his gun loaded again, would cut short the remarks with another shot, which, followed up with similar remarks, would provoke still another, when an alarm sounding, the guards at Libby and all the other buildings around us would turn out. An officer of the guard would go up with a squad into the third floor, only to find everybody up there snoring away as if they were the Seven Sleepers. After relieving his mind of a quantity of vigorous profanity, and threats to "buck and gag" and cut off the rations of the whole room, the officer would return to his quarters in the guard-house, but before he was fairly ensconced there the cap and blouse would go out again, and the maddened guard be regaled with a spirited and vividly profane lecture on the depravity of rebels in general and his own unworthiness in particular.

One night in January things took a more serious turn. The boys on the lower floor of our building had long considered a plan of escape. There were



ROSS CALLING THE ROLL.

then about fifteen thousand prisoners in Richmond—ten thousand on Belle Isle and five thousand in the buildings. Of these one thousand five hundred were officers in Libby. Besides there were the prisoners in Castles Thunder and Lightning. The essential features of the plan were that at a preconcerted signal we at the second and third floors should appear at the windows with bricks and irons from the tobacco presses, which we should shower down on the guards and drive them away, while the men of the first floor would pour out, chase the guards into the guard-house in the basement, seize their arms, drive those away from around Libby and the other prisons, release the officers, organize into regiments and brigades, seize the armory, set fire to the public buildings, and retreat from the city by the south side of the James, where there was but a scanty force of rebels, and more could be prevented from coming over by burning the bridges behind us.

It was a magnificent scheme, and might have been carried out, but there was no one in the building who was generally believed to have the qualities of a leader.

But while it was being debated a few of the hot heads on the lower floor undertook to precipitate the crisis. They seized what they thought was a favorable opportunity, overpowered the guard who stood at the foot of the stairs, and poured into the street. The other guards fell back and opened fire on them; other troops hastened up, and soon drove them back into the building, after killing 10 or 15. We of the second and third floors did not anticipate the break at that time, and were taken as much by surprise as were the rebels. Nearly all were lying down and many were asleep. Some hastened to the windows and dropped missiles out, but before any concerted action could be taken it was seen that the case was hopeless, and we remained quiet.

Among those who led in the assault was a drummer-boy of some New York regiment, a recklessly brave little rascal. He had somehow smuggled a small four-shooter in with him, and as they rushed out he fired it off at the guards.

After the prisoners were driven back, the rebel officers came in and vapored around considerably, but confined themselves to big words. They were particularly anxious to find the revolver, and ordered a general and rigorous search for it. The prisoners were all ranged on one side of the room and carefully examined by one party, while another hunted through the blankets and bundles. It was all in vain; no pistol could be found. The boy had a loaf of wheat bread, bought from a baker during the day. It was a round loaf, set together in two pieces like a biscuit. He pulled these apart, laid the four-shooter between them, pressed the two halves together, and went on calmly nibbling away at the loaf while the search was progressing.

Two gunboats were brought up the next morning and anchored in the canal near us, with their heavy guns trained upon the building. It was thought that this would intimidate us from a repetition of the attack, but our sailors conceived that, as they laid against the shore next to us, they could be easily captured, and their artillery made to assist us. A scheme to accomplish this was being wrought out, when we received notice to move, and it came to naught.

[*To be continued.*]

The Twenty-third Corps.

EDITOR NATIONAL TRIBUNE: Please give this explanation space in your valuable paper, to satisfy some critics on the formation of the Twenty-third Corps and Burnside's expedition over the mountains from Kentucky to East Tennessee. Gen. Burnside was relieved from the Army of the Potomac, Jan. 25, 1863, and arrived at Cincinnati, O., the last of the same month. Soon after two divisions of the Ninth Corps arrived from the Potomac army, and April 27 all the troops in, Kentucky not belonging to the Ninth Corps were organized into the Twenty-third Corps, which was commanded by Gen. G. L. Hartsuff. On the 2d of June Burnside moved his Headquarters from Cincinnati, O., to Lexington, Ky. The Ninth Corps was sent to reinforce Gen. Grant before Vicksburg. Burnside's army concentrated at Camp Nelson, about twenty thousand strong, and, without waiting for the return of the Ninth Corps, on Aug. 16, 1863, commenced the advance into East Tennessee, and went into Knoxville Sept. 1. In 14 days he had marched his army 250 miles.—Corp'l A. A. JONES, 65th Ill., Toledo, Iowa.

MEMOIRS OF GEN. WM. T. SHERMAN.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF.

Continuation of the Correspondence Relative to the Destruction of the City.

Sherman Wields a Sharp, Incisive Pen.

General Relaxation of Effort After the Capture of Atlanta.

The Losses of the Campaign.

(COPYRIGHT.)

CHAPTER XIX—(*continued.*)

FROM THE MAYOR OF ATLANTA.

ATLANTA, GA., Sept. 11, 1864.

Maj.-Gen. W. T. SHERMAN.

SIR: We, the undersigned, Mayor and two of the Council for the city of Atlanta, for the time being the only legal organ of the people of the said city, to express their wants and wishes, ask leave most earnestly but respectfully to petition you to reconsider the order requiring them to leave Atlanta.

At first view it struck us that the measure would involve extraordinary hardship and loss, but since we have seen the practical execution of it so far as it has progressed, and the individual condition of the people, and heard their statements as to the inconveniences, loss and suffering attending it, we are satisfied that the amount of it will involve in the aggregate consequences appalling and heartrending.

Many poor women are in advanced state of pregnancy, others now having young children and whose husbands for the greater part are either in the army, prisoners or dead. Some say: "I have such a one sick at my house; who will wait on them when I am gone?"

Others say: "What are we to do? We have no house to go to, and no means to buy, build or rent any; no parents, relatives or friends to go to."

Another says: "I will try and take this or that article of property, but such and such things I must leave behind, though I need them much."

We reply to them: "Gen. Sherman will carry your property to Rough and Ready, and Gen. Hood will take it thence on."

And they will reply to that: "But I want to leave the railroad at such a place, and cannot get conveyance from there on."

We only refer to a few facts to try to illustrate in part how this measure will operate in practice. As you advanced, the people north of this fell back, and before your arrival here a large portion of the people had retired south, so that the country south of this is already crowded, and without houses enough to accommodate the people, and we are informed that many are now staying in churches and other out-buildings.

This being so, how is it possible for the people still here (mostly women and children) to find any shelter? And how can they live through the Winter in the woods—no shelter or subsistence, in the midst of strangers who know them not, and without the power to assist them much, if they were willing to do so?

This is but a feeble picture of the consequences of this measure. You know the woe, the horrors, and the suffering cannot be described by words; imagination can only conceive of it, and we ask you to take these things into consideration.

We know your mind and time are constantly occupied with the duties of your command, which almost deters us from asking your attention to this matter, but thought it might be that you had not considered this subject in all of its awful consequences, and that on more reflection you, we hope, would not make this people an exception to all mankind, for we know of no such instance ever having occurred—surely never in the United States—and what has this *helpless* people done, that they should be driven from their homes, to wander strangers and outcasts, and exiles, and to subsist on charity?

We do not know as yet the number of people still here; of those who are here, we are satisfied a respectable number, if allowed to remain at home, could subsist for several months without assistance, and a respectable number for a much longer time, and who might not need assistance at any time.

In conclusion, we most earnestly and solemnly petition you to reconsider this order, or modify it, and suffer this unfortunate people to remain at home and enjoy what little means they have.

Respectfully submitted:

JAMES M. CALHOUN, Mayor.
E. E. RAWSON, Councilman.
S. C. WELLS, Councilman.

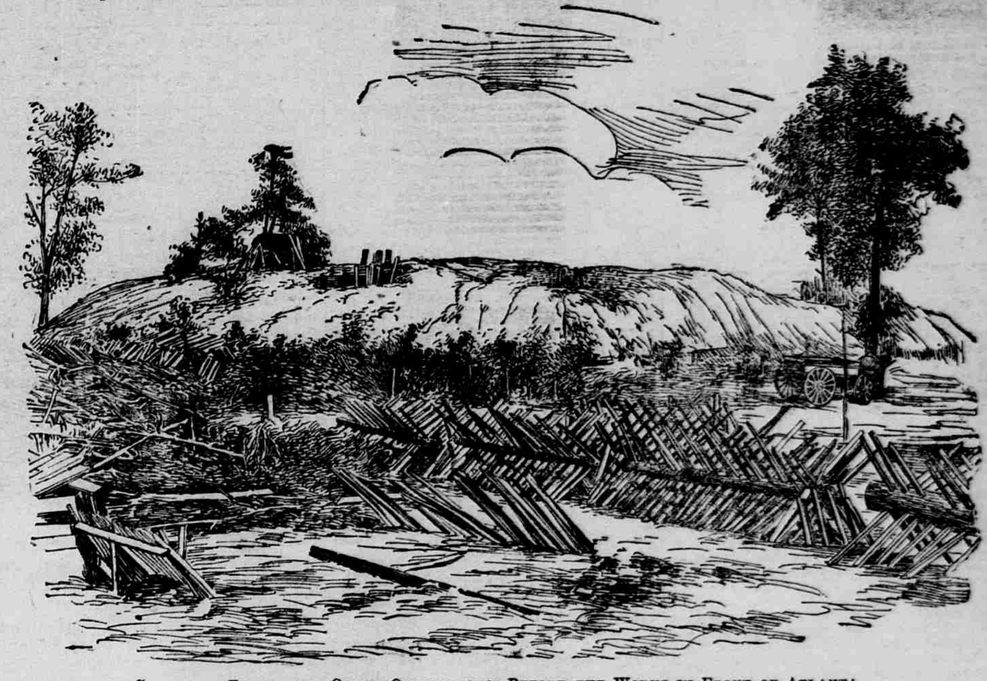
SHERMAN TO THE MAYOR.

HEADQ'RS MILITARY DIVISION OF THE MISSISSIPPI, IN THE FIELD, ATLANTA, GA., Sept. 12, 1864.

JAMES M. CALHOUN, Mayor, E. E. RAWSON and S. C. WELLS, representing City Council of Atlanta.

GENTLEMEN: I have your letter of the 11th, in the nature of a petition to revoke my orders removing all the inhabitants from Atlanta. I have read it carefully, and give full credit to your statements of the distress that will be occasioned, and yet shall not revoke my orders, because they were not designed to meet the humanities of the case, but to prepare for the future struggles in which millions of good people outside of Atlanta have a deep interest. We must have peace, not only in Atlanta, but in all America. To secure this, we must stop the war that now desolates our once happy and favored country. To stop war, we must defeat the rebel armies which are arrayed against the laws and Constitution that all must respect and obey. To defeat those armies, we must prepare the way to reach them in their recesses, provided with the arms and instruments which enable us to accomplish our purpose. Now, I know the vindictive nature of our enemy, that we may have many years of military operations from this quarter; and, therefore, deem it wise and prudent to prepare in time. The use of Atlanta for warlike purposes is inconsistent with its character as a home for families. There will be no manufactures, commerce, or agriculture here for the maintenance of families, and sooner or later will compel the inhabitants to go. Why not go now, when all the arrangements are completed for the transfer, instead of waiting till the plunging shot of contending armies will renew the scenes of the past month? Of course, I do not apprehend any such thing at this moment, but you do not suppose this army will be here until the war is over. I cannot discuss this subject with you fairly, because I cannot impart to you what we propose to do, but I assert that our military plans make it necessary for the inhabitants to go away, and I can only renew my offer of services to make their exodus in any direction as easy and comfortable as possible.

You cannot qualify war in harsher terms than I will. War is cruelty, and you cannot refine it; and those who brought war into our country deserve all the curses and maledictions a people can pour out. I know I had no hand in making this war, and I know I will make more sacrifices to-day than any of you to secure peace. But you cannot have peace and a division of our country. If the United States submits to



CHEVAL-DE-FRIESE AND OTHER OBSTRUCTIONS BEFORE THE WORKS IN FRONT OF ATLANTA.
(From a war-time photograph.)

Published by permission of D. Appleton & Co., publishers of the Personal Memoirs of Gen. W. T. Sherman.